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ABSTRACT

This report is a followup of Wildcat Welcome Week held at Kansas State University in the Fall, 1968. The report is based on 237 questionnaires correctly completed by new students who attended and participated in Welcome Week Activities. Of the eight sessions which were attended by the largest number of students, five were recreational and three were educational. Of the eight sessions with the most positive ratings, again five were recreational and three were educational. Not all of the sessions most highly attended were evaluated most positively. Students were also asked to make comments on registration and the total orientation week. About half of the students felt positively about registration, a quarter felt it was average. They felt the variety of activities during the week was good and that personnel were friendly and helpful. (KJ)

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Wildcat Welcome Week

Fall, 1968

An Evaluation

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and

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Evaluation and Research Report No. 6
Office of the Dean of Students

Kansas State University

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Orientation Wildcat Welcome Week

This report is a follow-up of Wildcat Welcome Week, Fall, 1968. Two hundred ninety-nine (133 women and 166 men) new students were sampled and asked to complete a questionnaire requesting evaluation of their attendance and participation in Welcome Week Activities. Two hundred forty-four, 82% of the total sample, returned their questionnaires to the Office of the Dean of Students. The report is based upon the 237 questionnaires correctly completed.

Wildcat Welcome Week for Fall, 1968, was planned by the University Orientation Council, a committee consisting of ten students representing eight student organizations, two faculty advisers and a representative from the Dean of Students Office. The program was designed primarily for the 2900 new students who had enrolled during the Summer Orientation Program. An additional session was planned during the first day for new students who had not pre-enrolled and were enrolling during Welcome Week.

The report presents the results in several sections. The first section provides a description of students sampled. Section two reports the attendance and evaluation of each of the major activities during the week. Section three presents the reactions of students to several suggestions for future programs and a summary of subjective comments and recommendations made by students. Finally, implications and recommendations based upon the results of the evaluation are discussed in the final section of the report.

I. Description of Students Sampled

Table I characterizes the new students who were sampled. It describes these students according to sex, new student classification and living group.

Table I

Characteristics of New Students Sampled

Sex	N	%	Year	N	%	Living Group	N	%
Male	131	55	Freshman	220	94	Residence Hall	171	73
			Transfer	4	2	Scholarship House	7	3
Female	106	45				Fraternity	32	14
			Summer School	9	4	Off-campus	24	10

Table 2 shows that males were slightly more in preponderance among the new student sample, since the group was 55% male and 45% female. At the same time, nearly the entire sample was entering freshman (94%), with transfer freshman (second-semester freshman) and freshman who had attended summer school composing the remainder of the group. Almost three fourths (73%) of the students in this freshman sample were residing in residence halls, while 10% were living in off-campus housing, 14% were living in fraternities, and a small portion (3%) were living in scholarship houses.

Table 2 indicates participation in the summer pre-enrollment program. Too, it shows the percentage of new students who pledged a Greek fraternity or sorority, Fall, 1968.

Table 2

Participation in Summer Pre-enrollment Program

Attendance at Summer Orientation	N	%	Pledging	N	%
No	42	18			
Yes	192	82	Yes	52	22
If Yes, Attendance at Microlab	**N**	**%**			
No	106	54	No	175	78
Yes	91	46			

A large percentage of this freshman group (82%) attended the summer orientation program available to enrolling freshman. Of the 82% who did attend, nearly half (46%) attended the micro-lab sessions, although it is significant to note that 54% of the freshman did not attend. Approximately one-fifth (22%) of the sample pledged a Greek fraternity or sorority, while the remaining four-fifths (78%) remained independent.

The information provided in Table 3 indicates when the new student applied to Kansas State and the college in which he intended to enroll.

Table 3

Date of Application
and
College of Enrollment

Application Time	N	%	College	N	%	College	N	%
Fall '67	27	12	Agriculture	26	11	Education	15	6
Winter	35	15	Architecture	15	6	Engineering	11	5
Spring	109	47	A & S	126	53	Home Economics	31	13
Summer	61	26	Commerce	13	5			

One-fourth (27%) of the sampled freshmen applied for admittance to K.S.U. during the fall or winter seasons prior to their beginning college. The remaining three-fourths (73%) applied during the spring and summer just preceding the fall opening of classes. Of this 73%, approximately 47% applied in the spring and 26% applied in the summer.

The largest number of freshman sampled were entering the College of Arts and Sciences (53%). The remaining half of the group was divided among agriculture and home economics - both with 12%, architecture and education - both with 6%, and commerce and engineering - both with 5%.

II. Attendance and Evaluation of Welcome Week Activities

On the next page is a listing of the major sessions available to new students during Wildcat Welcome Week, the number in attendance at each session and their evaluation of each session. Students evaluated each session by choosing one of five evaluation categories: excellent, good, average, below average, and poor. Attendance records are given in absolute numbers, evaluations are given in percentage.

Table 4

Attendance and Evaluation of
Wildcat Welcome Week Activities

Session	N	Excel-lent	Good	Total* Positive	Average	Below Average	Poor	Total** Negative
President's Convocation	110	10	61	71	26	3	0	3
Parent-Student Reception	64	14	47	61	30	5	5	10
Parent-Student Supper	49	29	44	73	26	2	2	4
Welcome Session	72	10	51	61	35	4	0	4
New Student Convention	123	16	34	50	24	11	15	26
Music & You at K-State	29	21	34	55	38	7	0	7
Warmup & Watermelon Feed	165	27	43	70	23	5	2	7
University for Man	24	26	30	56	35	9	0	9
Library Tours	75	15	39	54	24	10	12	22
Coke Party	2	0	50	50	50	0	0	0
Fashion Show	38	45	52	97	3	0	0	0
Freshman First Niter	105	13	62	75	22	3	0	3
Dance-Haymaker	160	20	47	67	19	8	6	14
How to Study	77	49	44	93	4	3	0	3
Freshman Seminar	66	27	41	68	14	8	10	18
Dance-Union	110	24	37	61	33	6	0	6
Football Scrimmage	90	24	61	85	13	2	0	2
Activities Carnival	160	32	52	84	12	2	2	4

* Positive includes excellent and good
** Negative includes below average and poor

Table 5 shows the eight sessions which were attended by the largest number of students.

Table 5

Sessions with the
Largest Attendance

Session	Attendance
Warmup & Watermelon Feed	165
Dance-Haymaker	160
Student Convention	123
Dance-Union	110
President's Convocation	110
Activities CArnival	106
Freshman First Niter	105
Football Scrimmage	90

With the exception of the Student Convention, President's Convocation, and Activities Carnival, it is possible to classify these sessions leading in attendance as being of a recreational and socializing nature. The other three are of a more educational or informative nature.

In Table 6 the percentage in the excellent and good ratings were combined and then placed in a total positive category. The chart contains a list of the top eight sessions in accordance with their total positive rating.

Table 6

Sessions with Most Positive Ratings

Session	N	Total Positive Rating (%)
Fashion Show	38	97
How to Study	77	93
Football Scrimmage	90	85
Activities Carnival	160	84
Freshman First Niter	105	75
Fellowship Supper	49	73
President's Convocation	110	71
Warmup & Watermelon Feed	165	70

It is possible to see by comparing the two charts that not all of the sessions most highly attended were then evaluated most positively. The dances at Haymaker and the Union and the Student Convention were well attended, but they did not receive high positive ratings. The two most positively received sessions were not particularly well attended. Among these eight most positively received sessions, five are once again of a recreational or socializing nature, while the How to Study session, Activities Carnival, and President's Convocation belong to the informative category.

A total negative evaluation rating was then formed by combining the percentages in the below average and poor categories. Table 7 lists those sessions which received over 5% in the total negative category.

Table 7

Sessions with Most Negative Ratings

Session	Total Negative Rating
New Student Convention	26
Library Tours	22
Freshman Seminar	18
Dance-Haymaker	14
Parent-Student Reception	10
University For Man	9
Music & You at K-State	7
Warmup & Watermelon Feed	7
Dance-Union	6

Among the most negatively evaluated sessions, there is practically an equal division between informative sessions and recreational sessions. The New Student Convention, library tours, freshman seminars, University for Man, and Music and You at K-State sessions are all of an informative nature, while the two dances, watermelon feed, and parent-student receptions are more recreational and social in nature.

Referring back to Table 4 Attendance and Evaluation of Activities, it can be seen that no group received less than a 50% total positive rating, and no group received more than a 26% total negative rating. Generally the average ratings fell between 20-40%, notable exceptions being the fashion show (4%), How to Study session (4%), Freshman Seminars (14%), football scrimmage (13%), and the Activities Carnival (12%). All of these groups received high positive ratings.

Since frequent mention has been made of recreational sessions and informational sessions, Table 8 contrasts the evaluations received for each of the two categories.

Table 8

Comparison of Information
and Recreation Oriented Sessions

Information Sessions	Total Positive	Total Negative	Average
Presidential Convocation	71	3	26
Welcome Session	61	4	35
New Student Convention	50	26	24
Music & You at K-State	55	7	38
University For Man	56	9	35
Library Tours	54	22	24
How to Study	93	3	4
Freshman Seminar	68	18	14
Activities Carnival	84	4	12

Recreational Sessions	Total Positive	Total Negative	Average
Parent-Student Reception	61	10	30
Fellowship Suppers	73	4	26
Coke Party	50	0	50
Fashion Show	97	0	3
Freshman First Niter	75	3	22
Dance-Haymaker	67	14	19
Dance-Union	61	6	33
Football Scrimmage	85	2	13
Warmup & Watermelon Feed	70	7	23

, Total Positive:

	50-60%	61-70%	71-80%	81-90%	91-100%
Information	1111	11	1	1	1
Recreation	1	111	111	1	1

Total Negative:

	0-10%	11-20%	21-30%
Information	11111 1	1	11
Recreation	11111 1111	1	

Average:

	0-10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40%	41-50%
Information	1	11	111	111	
Recreation	1	11	1111	1	1

Only slight differences can be detected in the evaluation distributions of informational sessions versus recreational sessions. The recreational activities tend perhaps to have the most favorable distributions, since they have more scores in the 60-80% columns,

while the informational sessions have more percentage scores in the 50-60% total positive category. Likewise, in the total negative score distributions, the recreational sessions have nine scores in the 0-10% category, while the informational sessions only have six. Among the average scores, the two groups are nearly comparable.

III. Comments and Suggestions

Students were encouraged to make subjective comments and respond to suggestions for future programs. Table 9 shows their reaction to the length of Welcome Week as well as the number of activities it should encompass.

Table 9

Suggestions for Future Length and Number of Activities

Duration	N	%	Number of Activities	N	%
1 Day Shorter	45	20	Fewer	43	19
Same Length	141	63	Same Number	136	60
1 Day Longer	38	17	More	46	21

In both instances approximately three-fifths of those students sampled thought the duration and number of events should remain approximately the same. One-fifth of the students felt the program should be one day shorter and consist of fewer activities, while the remaining one-fifth of the sample felt that, on the contrary, the program should be one day longer and should contain more activities.

Additionally, the student sample was asked to make subjective comments concerning two items: first, students were asked to evaluate registration and comment on any difficulties they experienced; and secondly, they were asked to make general comments concerning their reaction to the total orientation week.

Table 10 shows how students responded to the process of registration.

Table 10
Student Response to Registration

Evaluation	N	%
Excellent	30	13
Good	99	43
Average	65	28
Below Average	17	7
Poor	20	7

Fifty-six percent of the students had a positive reaction toward registration by evaluating it as excellent or good; twenty-eight percent felt that it was average; and 16% had a negative reaction by evaluating the process as below average or poor.

The subjective comments concerning registration can be divided into five main categories. First, students complained that registration seemed inorganized--signs were lacking, directions were uncertain, and there was confusion concerning the procedural format to be followed in the registration process. Second, students felt that the waiting lines in registration were tiring and cumbersome. Third, the numerous I.B.M. cards which secure personal information on students and which had to be filled out were repetitious and confusing. In connection with these cards, and as a fourth item, students felt they needed more advance instruction on how to register and on the type of information which would be requested on the cards. Fifth, students commented on schedule problems which they had as a result of the malfunctioning of the computer.

In their general comments concerning the total orientation week, students made specific reactions to several of the individual sessions. A number of students felt that the student convention was badly planned, boring, and needed further explanation. The library tours were inadequate in that the information offered had little practical value for application to course work assignments, and the lines were too long. The reactions to How to Study program were positive; the students seemed to find the hints offered useful and practical. It was not possible to determine a consensus on the comments regarding the dances held during the week. Many students took the time to comment on them, but the reactions were fairly equally divided between positive and negative. Such events appear to be evaluated in terms of the circumstantial factor of whether the person viewed himself as having had a "good or bad" time.

In general students made positive comments concerning the variety offered in the orientation week program and the friendliness of the personnel assisting with the program. They also felt that the week had been useful in helping them become acquainted with different aspects of the campus and its life and by giving them the opportunity to meet people and become acquainted.

There seemed to be a general consensus that more advance publicity of the week and its activities would be useful. Several mentioned that they felt some of the sessions were held at times which conflicted with other activities, but they did not elaborate.

Implications for Future Programming:

Direct feedback from the students who participated in Wildcat Welcome Week should be used as an integral part of the planning of future programs. Certainly, the data in the preceding pages has great relevance for examining the merits of specific programs. Too, it can help in determining the focus of an orientation program. Were there too many social and recreational events, for example, in contrast to academically-oriented programs? An examination of the nature of the events and the response of the students to the events should add insight to the consideration of that question. Too, the reactions of students to the registration process and their miscellaneous subjective comments are additional sources of ideas for the future.

In addition to the suggestions mentioned previously recommendations based upon the preceding data include:

1. More attention toward the preparation of the student for his involvement in the classroom. Not only should we be concerned here with academic practicalities, (e.g. How to Study) but also with the student's perception of the faculty member and his readiness to enter the academic year. For example, how can we assist the student with his expectations of the classroom and reduce the psychological distance he feels between himself and his instructor? What can we do to get a greater faculty involvement in the orientation program?

2. The successfulness of the social activities indicated that students used these activities to make new acquaintances and get their feet on the ground in their new environment. Yet, there may be other needs that incoming students have which are not presently being met.

3. We should expand our efforts to assess the expectations and interests of students entering Kansas State. The reason, whether it be responding to students as individuals or collectively as entering freshman, would be to make the student's initial encounter with the University a relevant encounter. In other words how can we utilize additional information to make orientation more responsive to the expectations and interests of new students.

4. Serious consideration should be given to the merits of repeating several of the sessions once the semester has begun. Library tours and How to Study sessions during the fourth or fifth week of school, for example, might be more meaningful to many students than they would have been during Wildcat Welcome Week.